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Holy Spirit

Five Addresses

BY

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The Holy Spirit's Mission to the World

I WILL ask you to turn to-night to the 16th chapter of the Gospel of John—7th to 11th verses.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged."

We have here succinctly depicted for us by our Lord Himself the special mission of the Holy Spirit to a lost world. Observe that the Spirit's presence on earth during the present dispensation is declared by Christ to be more important than His remaining here. He says, "It is expedient for you that I go away." We might naturally have thought that it would have been far better if He, the divine Man, could have remained in this scene, going about teaching and instructing men, making known to them the love of God, and declaring the righteousness that men are responsible to render in response to that love. But in this we would be wrong, for our Lord Jesus did not come to this world simply as a Teacher. He did not come merely to be the great Exemplar. He does not save men by His life before the cross; He saves by His *death*.

Our Saviour came into this world to die. He was made a little lower than the angels with a view to the suffering of death. He made this very clear when He said to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Elsewhere He declared He came "to give His life a ransom for many." And yet death had no claim on Him. We are told that, "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death," but He was the absolutely sinless One.

He was therefore not naturally subject to death. Had He so elected He might have lived on as the Prince of Life—the deathless One. In one sense it was as great a miracle for Him to die as to be raised from the dead. He says, "No man taketh my life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father." And so it was expedient that He should go away; and He must go by the way of the cross—there to give His life a ransom for many.

But even apart from this, it was expedient that He should go away that the Comforter might come. If He had remained on earth as He was before His death and resurrection, He must necessarily have been localized. As man He could not have been in more than one place at one time. When Lazarus lay so ill in Bethany, and the sorrowing sisters yearned for Christ's presence, He was away in the north of the land. They sent a message to Him saying, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." But days elapsed ere Jesus reached Bethany, and before He arrived Lazarus had died. Thus, if He had remained

on earth He could not have been in Palestine and in America at the same time. He might have gone from place to place all through the years, but millions never would have seen His face nor heard His voice. Therefore it was expedient that He should go away, that He should return to that heaven from whence He came. Upon His ascension to the right hand of the Father He sent down the Holy Spirit, another divine Person, one of the Eternal Trinity, to carry on the work that Christ began. And because the Holy Spirit never became incarnate, never took a human body, He can be in every place at one time.

Notice that this does not in the slightest degree dim the truth of His personality. Our Lord in speaking of Him uses the masculine pronoun. He constantly refers to "Him" as a divine Person, who as a living Person could do the things that Jesus said He would do. Now what was His special mission to be? Jesus says, "When He is come He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This is the purpose for which He came into the world.

This word here rendered "reprove" is variously translated. The reading given in the margin of our Authorized Version is "convince," and in other translations "convict" is used. It is the special mission of the Holy Spirit to convict, convince, or to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

I think that many, when they use the word "convict," have in their minds the producing of a deep emotional experience, intense sorrow and anguish because of sin. In fact, I believe this is the way it is generally used. A man attends a gospel meeting, and as his sins are brought before him, he is moved

to tears of penitence, and at last to confession and a complete breakdown before God. The sorrow accompanying this experience is generally spoken of as "conviction," and some people are troubled because they have never passed through just such an experience as this; and they even question the reality of their conversion to God, although trusting Christ, because they have not known a period of poignant grief and anguish because of sin.

Far be it from me to make light of such an experience. Yea, I would be thankful indeed to see people break down and weep bitterly over their neglect of Christ and their cold-hearted indifference to the gospel, and over their selfishness and wickedness. But there may be grief and tears without the conviction of which our Lord speaks here, On the other hand this conviction may be thoroughly genuine where no tear is shed, and where little real anguish of spirit is known. All are not constituted alike, nor do all express their exercises in the same way. It would be a mistake therefore to limit conviction to an emotional breakdown.

The word is really a legal term. It has to do with the presentation of evidence that conveys with it the proof of wrong-doing. The Spirit of God comes to bring to bear upon the minds and consciences of men the great wrong they are doing to God by sinning against Him. Now when this wrong is brought home to a man's conscience and he is really convinced of the evil of his way, he will be affected largely according to his disposition, or make-up, as we say. Some men are exceedingly sensitive and easily moved to tears. Others are calm, cool, logical, and while perhaps even more deeply convinced than their emo-

tional brethren, do not manifest it in the same way. God speaks to the spirit—to man's intelligence; He does not address Himself merely to his heart, his soul, his emotional nature. Sentimentality as such has no real place in New Testament evangelism.

In many quarters various kinds of efforts are made to move people to tears and to arouse the emotions through the use perhaps of music, sentimental solos and pathetic stories, and when people break down because of such tactics and make a religious confession they are registered as converts. But one might secure exactly the same results by having them witness a pathetic moving picture or attend a worldly concert where sentimental songs were beautifully rendered.

What is intended here is that the judgment of the man should be convinced; and so God says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Now, if God is going to reason with men in a matter of this kind, He must of necessity show them what provision He has made to bring about this great end. His word elsewhere is, "I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say." And the Holy Spirit's special work is to bring the word of the living God to bear upon the minds and consciences of men to convince them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

An important point is, Of what sins does the Holy Spirit seek to convict men? Are we to understand that He came from heaven to convict them of the injustice of over-reaching their neighbors; of trespassing upon the rights of others; or of the sinfulness of living

immorally, in an unclean, vile manner; or of the wickedness of transgressing against the well-being of society and violating human law? Is it of these sins that the Spirit of God came to convict men? Undoubtedly He will deepen the realization of the exceeding sinfulness of every sin; but *primarily* His work has not to do with matters of this kind. Every man's natural conscience convicts him of such sins as I have mentioned. Men may pretend to excuse acts like these, but they know in their own hearts that they are doing wrong when they commit them. And in addition to conscience, man has the "fiery law" given at Sinai with its stern, "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt *not*." This law, which is holy, just and good, makes sin exceedingly sinful, and thus convicts the wrong-doer of his wickedness in violating its precepts.

What then is the sin that the Holy Spirit principally brings before the mind of men? Our Lord tells us, "Of sin, *because they believe not on Me*." This is the one great damning sin—the one sin which, if unrepented of, shuts the door of heaven in a man's face. Listen, my friend, your sins and iniquities, however great, or how many they may have been, do not of themselves shut heaven's door to you. And for this reason; when Christ gave Himself a ransom on Calvary's tree, "Jehovah laid on Him the iniquity of us all." There He made a full and complete satisfaction to the righteous claims of the throne of God —made a perfect propitiation to Divine Justice for all the sins of which men could possibly be guilty. Christ thereby becomes an available propitiation for the whole world. And if you are ever shut away from the presence of God it will not be because you

came into this world a sinner, nor will it be because Adam sinned and you inherited certain evil tendencies. It will be, not only because you have yourself transgressed, or been guilty of grave offences against the laws of God and man, but because, though God had provided a way of salvation for you, you deliberately turned away from it and refused the Saviour who died that you might live.

Hear His own words in regard to this as recorded in the 3d chapter of John's Gospel, verses 17 and 18:

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth in Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

This then is the condemnation: God has provided a ransom, but men, alas! refuse His mercy, and thus go down to eternal woe—"loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." In thus refusing Christ they must in the final day of judgment give an account to God each for his own individual sins. They shall be judged "every man according to his works." On the other hand if they believe in the Saviour whom God has provided, their sins are put away, and they can look forward with perfect confidence to the day when God will judge the world in righteousness, knowing that their judgment is already passed, for Christ has answered for them.

The work of the Holy Spirit, then, is primarily to show men the enormity of their sin in rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ. A man may be guilty of breaking every commandment in the decalogue, but if he

comes to God in repentance and puts his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, he will find that all his sins have been covered by the atoning work of the Cross, and he may be saved for eternity by simple faith in the One who died for his offences and lives again for his justification. He thus becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus, because born of God, and created unto good works, as the natural result of the new life communicated to him.

On the other hand the man's life may be outwardly respectable; he may be rated as a good, moral citizen; he may refuse to stoop to things despicable, dishonorable, or unclean, yet he cannot escape the fact that he has sinned over and over again, and is therefore unfit for the presence of God. But He, against whom he has sinned, has provided a Saviour for him, and if he lives and dies rejecting that Saviour then there is no forgiveness, either in this world or in that which is to come. The worst sin that any man or woman can be guilty of is to reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

A young woman came up to me at the close of an address some time ago and said, "I do not like the way you put things. You made me feel very uncomfortable to-night. I have never knowingly done a wicked thing. I am respected by all my friends. No one can say a word against my character. The only thing that you yourself could object to is that I do not belong to any church, or care anything about Jesus Christ; and yet you class me with people who are living wickedly." I said, "Suppose you came and told me something like this: 'I have always been good and respectable. Nobody can say anything against me, except that, though I have the best

mother in the world, I do not care anything about her. I am utterly indifferent to her.' What would you expect me to think of you?" Oh!" she exclaimed, "I could not be a good girl and not love my mother!" "Well," I replied, "I told you to-night of One who has loved you with a love such as no earthly mother ever knew; One who for your sake gave His life to ransom you from a danger which your finite mind cannot realize, and who now asks your trust and confidence, and you boldly say you care nothing about Him! What do you suppose God thinks of such indifference to His Son?" She hung her head and said, "I never thought of it like that." And I had the joy a few nights later of seeing her humbly confess the Lord Jesus Christ as her own Saviour.

But after all, where is the ideal character I have sketched? Where is the man who has never done anything vile or unclean? Who would dare say he has never stooped to aught that is debasing or dishonorable? Moody used to say, "Character is what a man is in the dark." My friend, if the record of all you have said or thought or done *in the dark* were suddenly flashed upon this wall, how long would you sit here facing it? Remember, sins of the mind are as evil in the sight of God as sins of the flesh. And as to *all* men He has declared, "*There is none righteous,* NO, NOT ONE. There is none that doeth good...they have all gone out of the way, they have all together become unprofitable" (Rom. 3: 10, 12).

But it is for sinners such as these that Jesus died. How fearful the guilt then of the one who rejects Him, or neglects Him, and rushes headlong to the doom that sin deserves!

And so, my hearer, the great question that the

Spirit of God would now bring home to you is this: What relationship do you bear to Him who died on the cross? We read in the Word, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ let him be *Anathema, Maranatha.*" These two untranslated words (one from the Hebrew and the other from the Syriac) are evidently put into the text by the Spirit of God to challenge attention and inquiry. The first means "devoted to judgment," and the other means, "The Lord cometh." If you persist in refusing to trust the Saviour, you must be devoted to judgment at the coming of the Lord.

In the second place we read that the Holy Spirit has come to convict of righteousness. Here we have something that is perhaps a little more difficult to make clear. When a man realizes his sins, naturally the next thing of which he thinks is, "How can my sins be put away, and I obtain a rightousness in which I can stand without fear in the presence of a holy God?" This is what is made plain in the gospel. "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed." It was sin that brought Christ to the cross; but having made full atonement there, having satisfied every righteous claim of the throne of God, righteousness itself demands that He who thus died shall be raised from the dead, and by resurrection vindicated of every charge. And so He, the righteous One, having suffered once for all for sins upon the cross, has been raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, triumphant over death, and in righteousness has been seated as Man at God's right hand in heaven. "Of righteousness, because I go to my Father and ye see Me no more." My sin put Christ, the Son of God, on the cross, but God's righteousness raised Him

from the dead and placed Him, the risen Man, beside the Father in heaven. I have no righteousness in myself, but believing in Jesus as my Saviour, the Spirit of God points me to that exalted Man on the throne of the Universe, and says to me, as it were, "On the cross it was your sin He bore; on the Throne He is your righteousness." He who knew no sin was made sin-offering for us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

In my judgment, the finest experience hymn in the English language is"Jehovah Tsidkenu." It tells of God's dealings with Robert Murray McCheyne—one of the most spiritual Scotch preachers of the last century. Though he died a comparatively young man he left a name that is to-day held in reverence in thousands of Scotch homes because of his devotion to Christ. He was a well-brought up and carefully trained youth, whose outward life was without blame; in every way respectable, conscientious and well-informed; he knew his Bible, said his prayers, went to church, and was well-satisfied with his own righteousness, forgetting that Scripture has declared, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" in God's sight.

While he was away at school a message came telling him of the sudden death of a very godly elder brother. He went home to the funeral, and upon reaching the house of mourning asked to be permitted to go alone into the room where lay the body of his dearly loved brother. As he stood there gazing upon the still, silent form he asked himself the question, "If it were I, where would my soul be?" The answer to his own question honestly given was, "Lost forever." There and then he broke down,

gave up all pretension to a righteousness of his own, and found in Christ risen and glorified that righteousness which he celebrates in this little hymn. It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that "Jehovah Tsidkenu" means, "The Lord our Righteousness." This is how he tells the story:

"I once was a stranger to grace and to God;
I knew not my danger, I felt not my load;
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree,
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' was nothing to me.

"I oft read with pleasure, to soothe or engage,
Isaiah's wild measure or John's simple page;
But e'en when they pictured the blood-sprinkled tree,
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' seemed nothing to me.

"Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,
I wept when the waters went over His soul;
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the tree
'Jehovah Tsidkenu'—'twas nothing to me.

"When free grace awoke me by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me—I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety, in self could I see:
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' my Saviour must be.

"My terrors all vanished before that sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life-giving and free:
'Jehovah Tsidkenu' is all things to me."

Have you learned this lesson? Have you, through the Spirit's teaching, seen that you have no righteousness of your own?—that all your best deeds are stained with the corruption of your own heart? Has the Spirit of God then directed your eyes to that risen glorified Man at the Father's right hand? Do

you realize that He could not be there if He had not completely settled the sin question to God's satisfaction? He made Himself responsible for our sins on the cross, and He could not be in heaven to-night if He had not put them all away forever! But, blessed be His name, there He sits in highest glory, enthroned above all created intelligences, and He is Himself the righteousness of all who put their trust in Him. This is the righteousness which is of God through faith in Christ Jesus. It is of this that Paul speaks when he cries, "That I might be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

Now, what about practical righteousness as you go through this world? There is no power for it like heart-occupation with the risen Christ. Beholding Him changes us into the same image, from glory to glory. As He fills the soul's vision we live to please Him. For He who is my righteousness is also my life from the moment I believe in Him; and this life will be manifested in holy living. I do not go back to the law's demands for practical righteousness, for that law is "the strength of sin," but Christ risen is the strength of holiness; and as I learn to know Him where He now is, I grow in His likeness from day to day. It is the Holy Spirit's constant aim to occupy me with Christ there, that I may walk in the Spirit and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

But now there is something more. The Holy Spirit convicts not only of sin and of righteousness, but of *judgment.* People often misquote, because they misunderstand, this verse. They say, "Of judgment to come." But that is not it. That expression

is used by Paul as he reasoned with Felix of righteousness, of temperance, and of judgment to come; and Felix trembled, as well he might. That is very proper in its place, but here the point is, that the Holy Spirit convinces of *present* judgment, for it says, "Because the prince of this world *is* judged." The world judged Christ as unfit to live, and cried, "Away with Him, crucify Him." But by so doing it has condemned itself. The prince of this world did his utmost to circumvent God Himself by stirring up his dupes to demand that Christ be hanged on a tree. It was there that the Seed of the woman had His heel bruised by the serpent; but there the serpent's head was bruised, for by His death Christ made void Satan's power, and "delivered those who for fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

"His be the Victor's name,
Who fought the fight alone!
Triumphant saints no honor claim—
His conquest was their own.

"By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown;
Trod all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.

"Bless, bless, the Conqueror slain—
Slain in His victory.
He lived, He died; He lives again,
For thee, His Church, for thee!"

And so now that God has vindicated Christ, He has declared the whole world to be under judgment. This judgment is not yet executed, but it may soon be. It shall be when He is revealed from heaven in

flaming fire. Meantime the blessed gospel of the grace of God is sent into all the world, and when men receive it in faith they are brought out from under judgment, having passed from death unto life, and from the power of Satan unto God.

The man of faith sees the whole world with all its pleasures and follies as a judged scene. He learns to look at it all as Lot looked at Sodom of old—a scene exposed to the wrath of God, though not yet executed; and faith enables him to say with Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

It is blessed to see that we have not only found life through believing in Christ, but faith takes in the fact that we have died with Him to the world that crucified Him, and so we are no longer *of* the world, though in it, even as He is not of the world.

A young man in the ardor of his first love said to an aged brother one day, "I am glad to tell you I have accepted life through Christ." "That is very good," replied the other; "now I trust you will also accept death with Him." This was a new thought to the young convert, but as the blessedness of identification with Christ in His rejection was opened up to him, he cried, as the tears filled his eyes, "Yes, I see it now; His death was mine, and I have died with Him to all the pleasures and follies of earth; and now I am to live for Him alone in this scene." May the Lord grant that all our hearts may enter into this, for His name's sake!

The Witness of the Spirit

I HAVE three texts which I desire you to read with me this evening, and to carefully note the context in each instance.

These are the texts: first; Heb. 10: 15; "The Holy Ghost also is a witness TO us." 2nd, 1 John 5: 10; "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness IN himself." 3rd, Rom. 8: 16; "The Spirit itself beareth witness WITH our spirit, that we are the children of God."

I am very desirous to be used of God this evening to lead some bewildered soul out of confusion and perplexity of mind into the blessedness of settled peace with God. I am persuaded that there are few subjects on which Christians, generally, are so bewildered as the teaching of Scripture concerning the witness of the Holy Spirit. Many think of it as an emotional experience, a happy feeling, a spiritual exhilaration, an ecstatic state of mind, or a vision of some kind, to do for them what in their estimation the word of God alone cannot do, namely, give them a knowledge of acceptance in Christ. But all of these are wrong, and while some such subjective experiences may result from and follow the witness, none of these, nor all of them together, constitute that witness.

In order to introduce my subject in a practical way, let me tell you a true story. Some years ago I was frequently invited to a certain western city to hold gospel meetings, and on each occasion I was

entertained by a dear, godly family, of which the husband and wife were both earnest and happy Christians, though both saved only a few years before. It was always a joy to meet them, and to share with them in the precious things of Christ.

But the last time I was at their home I was only in the house a few minutes when I saw that something was wrong. The wife was no longer the joyous believer she had been. Her face was gloomy and downcast. She was plainly worried and anxious, and naturally her trouble was reflected in the face of her husband. The next morning, after he had gone down to business, she asked me if I would bring my Bible to the living-room and go into a question that was greatly exercising her; which I was, of course, glad to do. She looked nervous and distressed, and for a few moments did not speak. Her very fingers twitched, as a nervous person's often do. Then she suddenly blurted out the question with intense vehemence, "Have you the witness of the Spirit?" I was surprised, but replied calmly, "That is easily answered. I have had the witness for many years. Otherwise I would not dare preach to others as I do." "Well," she said sadly, "I haven't, and I never realized it till recently. I have lost all my joy and I am afraid I am not saved, for I have never received the witness."

"This is very remarkable," I said, "for I have heard you say many times you trusted Christ and rested on His word, and I have noticed how happy you were. How did you come to your present state of mind?"

She then related an incident that had happened but a few weeks before. A peddler had come to her

door, offering some kind of household ware, which she however did not need. But just as he was leaving she offered him a gospel tract. Upon noticing its title he exclaimed, "Oh, a tract! Thank you. Let me give you one of mine," and he handed her a paper on some so-called Pentecostal experience, adding, as she accepted it, "Have you the witness of the Spirit, sister?" She was confused by the question and hesitated; then said, "I am not sure that I understand you. I know I am saved through the testimony of the Word of God. What do you mean by the witness?"

"Do you mean to tell me you are a Christian and you do not understand about the witness?" he said. "You are deceiving yourself. If you had the witness you would know it, and if you haven't it you have never been converted."

He spoke so positively that she became greatly troubled, and she asked, "Well, what do you mean by the witness? How did you get it?" Then he related a very stirring experience. According to his testimony he had been a professing Christian and a church-member for many years, but with no assurance of salvation. Recently he had attended some very wonderful meetings conducted by a Spirit-filled woman who wrought marvelous healings, and had much to say of the witness and of the baptism of the Spirit. He became convinced that what he lacked was "the witness;" so he went forward, fell on his knees with a throng of seekers at the close of the preaching, and prayed earnestly for the missing thing. He did not obtain it at the meeting, but late at night, on returning home, he was so agitated he went out to his barn, and there spent several hours

crying out to God for the witness. "Suddenly," he declared, "I got it."

"What did you get?" she gently inquired. "I got the witness. It came like a ball of fire through the roof, and hit me in the breast and burned like fire. It burned out all the doubts and all the sin from my heart, and I knew then it was the Spirit, witnessing that I was a child of God. I have not had any desire for sin since, nor any sinful thought. Did you ever have anything like that?"

"No," she said, "I never have." "Well," said he, "You must not think you are a Christian, then. What you need to do is to seek the witness, and don't stop till you receive it."

She had been unhappy ever since, she said, and filled with doubt and uncertainty; and though she had prayed for "the witness" she did not get it. Then turning her anxious eyes on me, she exclaimed, "Did you have anything like that when you received the witness?"

"No, thank God, I did not!"

"Thankful you did not! What did you get then?"

"I'll tell you; I received something much better than that. If a ball of fire had hit me I never could have been certain whether it came from God or whether it came from Satan. But I have a witness that is unmistakable, and I will gladly tell you about it. But which do you want first? Do you want the witness *to* you, or the witness *in* you, or the witness *with* you."

"Why," she exclaimed, "I did not know there were three of them. Which comes first?"

"A very good question," I said, "and we will seek the answer in the word of God." I then turned

her to the 10th chapter of Hebrews, and put before her what I now want to bring to your attention.

You will perhaps remember the theme of this precious portion of the Bible. Having first established Christ's superiority over angels, prophets and leaders of the old dispensation, the apostle then shows the transcendent character of the new covenant of grace, and of the one sacrifice of the cross as compared with the by-gone covenant and the many sacrifices of the old dispensation. He points out that those offerings could never perfect the conscience of the person who brought them, because it is impossible that the blood of animals should cancel sin.

> "Not all the blood of beasts
> On Jewish altars slain,
> Could give the guilty conscience peace,
> Or wash away its stain."

In those sacrifices offered year after year continually, there was but a remembrance, a calling to mind again and again, of sins from year to year. They could not purge the conscience, as David says in Ps. 51: "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it ... Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

All that the legal sacrifices could do was to bring the sin to mind. That is, when an Israelite brought his offering he thereby confessed that he had sinned, that his sin was an offence against the divine law, and required propitiation. All these sacrifices but pointed to Him that was to come—to Christ.

Suppose you are in debt. Your creditor rightfully demands payment, but you are unable to settle. The best you can do is to give your note for the

amount. But does a note pay the debt? No; but the note is a calling to mind of the debt. If the note is renewed from year to year, the debt is uncancelled. It is a "remembrance again," an acknowledgment made every time you give a new note. So with the sacrifices of old. But the face of the note constantly increases, owing to the unpaid interest, and the debt becomes larger all the time.

Now, suppose a wealthy friend endorses the note for you. He pledges himself to pay, if you cannot. Ah, that changes the whole thing. When the note becomes due, your creditor collects from *him*, and you are free.

My friends, Jesus did that very thing. He said, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) *to do thy will, O God.*" By that He said, "I will be responsible. I will endorse all those notes. I agree to pay." And He did! On Calvary's cross He settled in full for every one who believes in Him. Old Testament believers looked forward to His coming. We look back to His cross. But all alike are "justified freely through His grace by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He settled the sin question. He did the will of God, and we read, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Thus every charge is cleared away; all iniquity is purged; for, "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Now observe, it is of this blessed fact that the Holy Spirit witnesses.

Of this offering of Christ to cancel the debt of our sins we read thus: "Whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness to us," and the apostle quotes from the prophet Jeremiah this new covenant, with its grand cul-

mination, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This is the Spirit's witness. It was He who caused Jeremiah to thus testify. The Scriptures are His testimony. He therein witnesses *to* us; we receive His witness, and thus have the assurance that our sins are gone, our conscience is purged, and our souls are free. Who would exchange God's sure witness for a vision, a dream, or an emotional experience?

And, observe, you do not need to pray and plead with God to give you this blessed witness. It is there in the Word for you to *believe.*

I am glad to tell you the lady with whose story I began, saw the truth of it, and she exclaimed, "Why, then I have had the witness for some years! How foolish I was to doubt."

I want to tell you of another case, sadder than this one. I was asked to call on a nearly distracted young mother who had the notion that she had committed the "unpardonable sin." If I diagnosed her case correctly, she was really a believer; but some cloud had come in between her soul and God, and she had fallen into darkness. Unconfessed sin will often produce this effect. I probed her to find out if this were the case. She said she had sinned, but had confessed all to God. Only, she could not get her joy back. Though she had prayed for six weeks the Lord would not answer, and she felt He had cast her off because she had no faith. She did not believe in Him, and He would not hear her cry.

I tried to help her by turning to many scriptures, but she could not seem to fix her attention on any of them, and I began to feel it was a case for a physician rather than a preacher. Finally, I felt utterly

cast down myself, for I could not seem to do anything for her. Then I cried to God. My heart said, "Lord, what more shall I say to this woman?" Quick as a flash I thought of a new line of approach. I said, "You tell me you don't believe in Jesus, and so He won't hear you, though you have been praying to Him for six weeks for help?" She assented and added, "I *want* to believe, but I can't. I don't know how to get faith. I am afraid I have committed the unpardonable sin."

"Well," I suggested, "if He has given you up, why don't you try someone else?"

"Why, who else is there to try?" she asked.

"Why not try the blessed Virgin Mary for a while at least? I have a Roman Catholic friend who says he never goes to Christ direct, but always to His blessed mother; hers is a tender woman's heart, and he asks her to plead for him, for no one has so much influence with a son as his mother."

The lady was aghast! I knew she thought my words sacrilegious, but I wanted to rouse her, and I succeeded. "Why do you tell me to pray to the Virgin Mary?" she sternly interposed. "She is only a woman. I cannot go to her. A human being can not save me."

"Ah! I see you feel the need of superhuman help. Then why not try the Archangel Michael? He is the great prince that stands for Daniel's people. He is a very powerful being, and is the one who is going to drive Satan out of the heavenly places. You might pray to him for at least a week, and see if he will not help you."

She sprang to her feet with indignation, exclaiming, "I don't understand you at all. I don't believe

in the Virgin Mary or in the Archangel Michael. They cannot save me. I would *not* pray to them."

"But," I added, "you don't believe in Jesus either." Before I could finish she cut in, "Why, of course I believe in *Him!* What a fool I have been! There is no one else in all the universe I would think of going to but to *Him.* Oh, I see it now, I thought I had no faith, but I know I have, for I trust in Jesus only."

Together we dropped on our knees, and as the tears rolled down her cheeks she thanked Him for dying for her, and told Him she trusted Him *alone.* It was easy, then, to give her some precious portions of the Word to clear away her remaining difficulties. She received them in all simplicity, as the Spirit's blessed witness.

But I must now turn to the consideration of the second phase of my theme. Scarcely had the one of whom I told you first, seen the truth of the witness *to* us, when she looked up inquiringly and asked, "But is there not a passage that says the Lord will put the witness *in* us?" For reply I turned her to 1 John, chap. 5. This is another very wonderful portion, and again the great theme is the work of Christ. "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." And to what does He bear witness? To the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood."

John was standing by the cross when the soldier pierced the Saviour's side. "He that saw it bare witness," he says. And it is he who recorded the striking fact that blood and water gushed forth. Years had gone since that memorable day, but the blood and the water had ever been associated in the

apostle's mind: blood for *judicial,* and water for *moral* cleansing. Now as he writes his epistle of light and love, he proclaims the power of the blood to cleanse from all sin before God, and the application of the water of the Word to cleanse from all defilement day by day. And of this, he tells us, the Holy Spirit bears witness.

It is important to observe that there are three words, "witness," "record," "testimony," used in our Authorized Version in this fifth chapter, which are but various renderings of *one* Greek word. Read the entire passage using the word "witness" in each instance. How plain it becomes. God by the Spirit has borne witness to the atoning work of His Son. Then He tells us in verse 9 that if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. Now, we *do* receive the witness of men. We believe what men tell us concerning things we have no means of proving, or searching out for ourselves. How much more should we receive and rest upon the witness of Him who cannot lie.

Some object that, as it is written, "All men have not faith." But it is sin persisted in that makes it impossible for men to believe God. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." That is why we are told, "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." There must be divine testimony before there can be faith. And if God has sent His Word to you, you are responsible to believe it. Nay, you sin against light, and insult God to His face if you do not believe. The witness of God is that which He has witnessed by His Spirit in the Word concerning His Son.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar because he believeth not the witness that God gave of His Son." Now, look at this, and weigh it well. You either have the witness *in* yourself that God has given concerning His Son, or you are making Him a liar! Fearful alternative, yet terribly true!

A Sunday-school teacher once asked her class of boys, "Is there any thing God cannot do?" All, save one, responded, "No, God can do everything." She agreed to this, and was proceeding with the lesson when one lad exclaimed, "But, teacher, I know two things God cannot do!" "Oh, no," she sweetly answered, "God is all powerful. There is nothing He cannot do."

"But," the boy persisted, "I know two things He cannot do."

"Well, what do you think God cannot do?" she asked. Confidently came the answer, "God cannot lie, and He cannot see my sins since they are covered by the blood of Jesus."

Sometimes people say after listening to a gospel address, "I will try to believe." Try to believe whom? Do you dare to talk of trying to believe God? What sinful impudence! What downright impertinence! He who cannot lie gives you His witness concerning His Son, and you tell Him you will try to believe! You either do believe Him, or you do not; and if you do not believe you make Him a liar. You treat His testimony as though it were unworthy of credence. "This is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." If you believe the message, you have eternal life, and you have the

witness within, for God's testimony is written in your heart.

It is this engrafted word, received by faith, that produces the new birth. We are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and endureth forever...and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." To believe the gospel is not simply to give mental assent to the facts recorded in the four Gospels, but it is to trust your soul to the Christ of whom they speak.

I cannot put my sin away, but the Spirit's witness tells me that "Jehovah laid on Christ Jesus the iniquity of us all." I see myself included, and I rest upon that word. Thus I have the witness in myself. Who would exchange this unimpeachable witness for a vision of "a fiery ball," or even of angels descending from heaven to assure him of salvation? Could I trust the word of an angel more than the word of the living God? And how could I be sure that the angel was not Satan himself transformed as an angel of light to deceive me? But the word of God can never mislead. It is a witness that cannot fail. I believe it, and I have it in my heart.

But now I ask you to consider our third text. We turn to Romans, eighth chapter—that high tableland of truth—where I learn that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, and no separation from the love of Christ that met us in our need and will never surrender to destruction the one that has fled to Him for refuge.

In this chapter I am taught three marvelous truths; I am in Christ Jesus; the Holy Spirit dwells in me;

and God is for me. Thrice-blessed am I since all these are true.

The Holy Spirit, a divine Person, eternally one with the Father and the Son, comes to dwell in the believer. By Him I am sealed unto the day of redemption. He claims me for Christ, and by Him I enter into communion with God. Apart from His indwelling I am not a member of Christ—"If anyone have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." But, having received Him by faith, He now abides within me. He is the anointing, and by Him I am led into the knowledge of the word of God. He opens up the treasures of divine truth. He takes up the things of Christ and shows them unto me. "He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." But how? Is it by producing happy feelings, or ecstatic experiences? Again, No!

Look at what follows: "And if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Now, how do I get this knowledge? By the Spirit's witness. But how, or where? Once more we come back to the same truth we have seen before—*by believing the word of God.* I might fancy that my happy feelings witnessed that I was a child of God; but will happy feelings tell me I am an "heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ?" No. It is only the word of God that can make these blessed facts known to my spirit. The Holy Spirit who indwells the believer opens the Word to my spirit, and thus I am made to understand my present relationship to the Lord, and my high destiny. I learn that I, who once was an alien and an outcast, am now, through infinite grace, a child of God and joint-heir with Christ, for He says, "All things are yours, and ye are

Christ's, and Christ is God's." Blessed witness this, filling my soul with exultant gladness and giving me songs in the night.

By the Spirit I cry, "Abba, Father." The indwelling Spirit produces within me a sense of filial responsibility and privilege. Once I was afraid of God, now I love Him and delight to be in His presence. I say with David, "It is good for me to draw near unto God." And I know what David could not know in a past dispensation—that God is my Father and I am His child. But it is the Word that the Spirit uses to lead me into this blessedness. And the better I understand the Word, the more I will enjoy communion with my Father in the Spirit's power. For by the Spirit I am able to look in God's face and cry, "Abba, Father," knowing I have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and born of the Word and the Spirit.

I have used the first person singular in these closing words. May you, my hearers, each be able to do the same, thus rejoicing in the witness of the Spirit!

The Holy Spirit and the Believer

"Now He which establisheth us with you in (or into) Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. 1: 21, 22).

IN these two verses we have the various operations of the Holy Spirit succinctly epitomized in a striking way. There are four distinct phases of His work in and for the believer.

First, establishment into Christ, which includes *sanctification* by the Spirit, *new birth* by the Spirit, and *the baptism* of the Spirit.

Second, our *anointing* by the same Spirit, with which all His gifts are linked.

Third, the *sealing* by the Spirit, insuring our full conformity to Christ in the day of the redemption of the body.

And fourth, the *earnest* of the Spirit, which necessarily involves the thought of the firstfruits and the filling of the Spirit.

Let us look at each subject in the order given.

Establishment into Christ is more than individual salvation, though it involves that, for the greater includes the less. The apostle says, "He who establisheth us *with you* into Christ," which suggests the truth of the unity of the body, and so links with 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

This is the great dispensational work of the Holy Spirit, the express purpose for which He was given.

But ere He could form the body, there must be individuals separated from the world and born from above, and it was the work of the Spirit to bring this about. He it is who sanctifies by using the Word of God to awaken the sinner; and by that same Word, believed, He produces the new birth. Born of water and of the Spirit is really born of the Word, which has become living in the soul by the direct operation of the Spirit, thus completely changing the ways. It is the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Peter writes, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God... and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." James tells us, "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth." And our Lord says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing."

The Holy Spirit sanctifies by exercising the soul of the unsaved one—brooding over him while still in the darkness, then the light shines in and the man lives unto God, as the Word is believed.

This was true in all dispensations. Men ever needed a second birth to bring them into the family of God. "The flesh profiteth nothing;" it could never be made acceptable to God. A new nature was a necessity, and this the Holy Spirit produced, acting in power, before He came at Pentecost to dwell in us, and abide with us here in our Lord's absence.

But on that memorable day He did a new work. He took up one hundred and twenty units (all born of God), and He baptized them into one body, thus forming the Church of the new dispensation. By

this act He established them into the Christ, making them one body with their glorified Head, and linking them one with another in a union as close as members in the human body. The baptism of the Spirit is therefore collective, and, as I have remarked, dispensational. It is not something to be sought or prayed for, nor yet tarried for, since the body has already been formed.

In the four Gospels and the first chapter of Acts, the baptism of the Spirit was yet future. In the 2d chapter of Acts the promise is fulfilled. In 1 Cor. 12: 13 we have the only reference to the Spirit's baptism after the 11th of Acts. It is a doctrinal statement to be *believed*, not an exhortation to seek after an experience.

Four times, as related in the Acts, special supernatural manifestations accompanied the reception of the Spirit, as various companies were incorporated into the assembly. In chapter 2 all were Jews; in chapter 8 the same blessing falls upon regenerated Samaritans, adding them to the body of Christ. In chapter 10 the nucleus of Gentiles is baptized into the same body. And in chapter 19 a remnant of John's disciples are brought in. There is a special miraculous endowment in each instance to confirm the souls of the saints, and to make known the truth that all distinctions are done away in Christ, and there is but "one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling."

What grace on God's part to give this four-fold testimony in the beginning! But what folly for Christians now to expect a duplication of these initiatory manifestations. The body is formed; all believers have their part in it. And as any are sanc

tified and born of the Spirit, they receive Him as the indwelling Guest, and are thus brought into the good of the Spirit's baptism.

If some scriptures seem to indicate that the baptism of the Spirit is a blessing to be received subsequent to conversion, it is well to examine them carefully, noting the context, and asking, "Was this spoken before or after Pentecost?"—for the difference is immense; as a new dispensation began when the Holy Spirit descended to dwell in the believer.

Let me mention several such passages and seek to help you to place them. Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (Luke 11:13). Many take this as their authority for seeking the gift of the Spirit by prayer. But this was spoken by our Saviour before the cross. The Father gave the Spirit at Pentecost; He does not now wait for us to ask Him to do so again; for the wondrous gift once given abides in the Church and indwells every believer, having baptized all into one body, as we have seen.

What of the words, "He hath been with you, He shall be in you"? Does it not imply that some are only *born* of the Spirit, and others indwelt? When did Jesus so speak? Before or after Pentecost? You say, "Before." Correct! And He there contrasts the two dispensations. The Spirit was *with believers* before the cross, He is *in* them now. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9).

But did not our Lord command His disciples to tarry till endued with power from on high? He

did, and He particularly indicated where they were to tarry—"in Jerusalem." No other place would do. For there the Spirit came, even as the Son came to Bethlehem.

A gentleman said to me recently,"I have just come from a great tarrying meeting. Hundreds have been tarrying for many days at San José, California, waiting for the Holy Ghost." I asked, "What authority did you have for that?" He replied, "Why, Jesus said, 'Tarry in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.'"

"Well, my friend," I inquired; "are you not confounding locations and time? You are over ten thousand miles too far away, and over eighteen hundred years too late." Observe: If some of the disciples had "tarried" at Nazareth, and some at Bethlehem, and others at Bethany, would the Holy Spirit have fallen on them on that Pentecostal morning? Surely not! The command was, "Tarry at Jerusalem," and as they waited there, like a rushing, mighty wind He came, sent from the Father and the Son to form the body of Christ, and to endue with power the waiting disciples that they might bear testimony to the risen Christ. Thus He established them into the Christ—making them members of His body.

But let me not be misunderstood. I am not insinuating that it is a vain thing for any believer or any company of believers to wait on God for power to overcome the enemy and sound out the evangel. It is always well to be thus before Him. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." This is true in all dispensations. But we wait, not for Him to *send* the Spirit, for He is already here,

and by His baptism we have all been joined to the body. We need, however, to wait on God to show us any hindrance in our lives that may be restraining His working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. As we judge ourselves, and learn from our past failures to walk humbly and in self-distrust, we make room for the Holy Spirit to fill us with divine power, and to use us for the glory of God and the blessing of a needy world.

But to tarry for the baptism of the Spirit is an evidence of utter ignorance of God's dispensational ways. Remember, the only place where the baptism is definitely mentioned in all the epistolary portions of the New Testament is this one verse, namely, 1 Cor. 12: 13; and here it is distinctly spoken of as a past event, into the good of which we all have been brought.

Trusting I have been able to make this important point clear, I pass on to the second phase of the Spirit's work—the anointing.

It may help us here to inquire: Who were anointed in Old Testament times? You who are familiar with your Bibles will at once reply, "Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil to induct them into their offices." And some will remember that the cleansed leper was anointed first by blood and then with oil, just as the priests were.

The leper is the type of ourselves, unclean by sin, cleansed by blood, and anointed with the Spirit of God. We are anointed as "kings and priests unto God" (Rev. 1: 6).

Our Lord was anointed without blood. He was the sinless One who needed no sacrifice for Himself. So we read, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with

the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). This anointing took place immediately following His baptism in the Jordan when He presented Himself without spot to be our Saviour. On the cross He *offered up* Himself. This is to be distinguished from His offering Himself, or pledging Himself, to fulfil all righteousness on our behalf. As He came up out of the water the Holy Spirit descended like a dove, and it abode on Him, and the Father's voice was heard declaring, "This is my beloved Son in whom I have found my delight." Thus He was anointed—pointed out as the predicted Prophet, Priest, and King.

He was the Prophet on earth, sealing His testimony with His blood. He is the Priest in heaven, ever living to make intercession for us. He is coming again to reign as the universal King.

Now in a very precious sense we share this threefold ministry. Anointed by the Spirit at our conversion to God, having been cleansed by the blood of Christ, we are empowered to speak for God on earth as His prophet-messengers. We are made priests, holy and royal, to enter into the holiest as purged worshipers, and to show forth His praises in the world. And we are to reign with Him as kings in the day of His power.

But is this true of all believers, or only of a favored few? Surely, of all, as a careful study of 1 John 2:12-29 will make plain. In verse 12 the apostle addresses all believers as "children" whose sins are forgiven. The word "little" is better omitted. The term used has reference neither to size or age, simply children—those born into the family.

In verse 13 he divides the children into three classes. There are, in the family of God, "fathers," "young men," and "babes." Here the term used is properly translated "little children." To these three classes he then addresses himself, giving to each a separate message. It is to the babes he says, in verse 20, "Ye have an unction (or, anointing) from the Holy One, and ye know all things." And again, in verse 27, while still addressing the youngest and feeblest of saints he writes, "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

The anointing then is the portion of the babe in Christ; how much more of the young men and fathers. All Christians are anointed. In fact, this is involved in the very name divinely given them. Christ means the "anointed." Christians are anointed ones, by the Spirit linked with their glorified Head.

By the anointing our understanding is opened that we may understand the Scriptures and be kept from Satanic perversions of the truth. It is to the unregenerate in Laodicea that the Lord says, "Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see." This was their great need, as natural men, unable to comprehend spiritual things.

What real believers need is to learn to depend on the Holy Spirit, and thus profit by the anointing which abides in them. He delights to glorify Christ, and if there be but subjection of heart to Him, and a willing mind to be guided aright, He will preserve

the simplest from error and lead them into all truth.

I was in Los Angeles some years ago, and one evening was listening to a well-known "Russellite" setting forth his God-dishonoring teaching with great liberty of speech and a most dogmatic assurance of manner. Standing in the crowd was a plainly dressed colored man, humble in appearance and probably unlettered, who seemed to me to be listening with great interest. Fearing he would be deceived by the specious sophistries of the Restitutionist I remained, with the intention of trying to help him after the address was finished. But I found I was not needed, for he had better help than I could give. As the speaker concluded his harangue, a man stepped over to the colored brother, slapped him familiarly on the back and exclaimed, "Well, George, what do you think of that?" "That sure was some talk," replied the negro; "Dunno when I'se heard so smart a man befo.' "—"He certainly knocked the bottom out of all your old Baptist doctrines, didn't he? He showed the churches are all wrong that believe in the Trinity and the Deity of Christ, and all that stuff."—"Yes, sah, he just tore up by the roots all I'se been believin' fo' yeahs." "Well, I suppose you'll join his crowd now?" *"No, sah,* NO! ah ain't gwine to do that. Couldn't answer him, sah, but a voice in ma' soul's sayin' 'lies, lies, lies,' all the time he was talkin'—ain't gwine to believe a word of it. No, sah—not a word." I was delighted to see how the anointing had enabled him to withstand this assault of the devil. The Spirit dwells within us for that very purpose.

All the gifts are linked with the anointing. We read in 1 Cor. 12, "There are diversities of gifts, but

the same Spirit." He imparts some gift to each member of the body to be exercised in subjection to the risen Lord. All have not the same gift; and while we are told to "covet earnestly the best gifts," we are not promised any particular gift that we might admire and long for. He divideth "to every man severally as He will," that each may profit thereby, and for the edification of the whole body.

Nor are the spectacular gifts, such as healing, tongues, miracles, the most important. The greatest of all is prophecy—that is the ability so to present the truth of God that men will be stirred up, blessed, and comforted thereby. No other gift compares with this in value. But all must be exercised in "the love of the Spirit."

The third thing I would notice is the sealing of the Spirit. This is another term that is used in connection with our Lord Jesus Christ. In John 6:27 He says Himself, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you, for Him hath God the Father sealed." This is the chapter in which He speaks of Himself as the "Bread of God," "the Living Bread," and "the True Bread from heaven." This life-giving Bread came forth and was presented to men that they might eat and live forever, as sealed by the Father. Here we see how the anointing and the sealing take place at one and the same time. For the anointing really was the sealing. It was the Father owning Him as His well-beloved One, and declaring His delight in Him.

I heard a very homely illustration recently that I cannot forbear passing on. How common a thing

is it to-day to find bread offered for sale with the maker's name, or some trade-name, either put upon it by a stamp or literally baked into it. The bread is sealed with the name of the baker. He practically says, "This bread is good. I put my name upon it, for I stand back of it in every particular." So has God the Father sealed the Bread from heaven. He acknowledged and approved His blessed Son in everything, for in the fullest sense Jesus could say, "I and my Father are one." Think of it! I and my Father! If He were less than Divine what terrible pretension, what effrontery that would have been! Every saved one would reverse the order and say, My Father and I. But He is the Eternal Son become flesh, and one with the Father.

But now we pass on to consider the sealing of the believer; for the same Spirit who sealed the Saviour seals all who are saved by Him. The first passage that demands our attention is Eph. 1: 13: "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

In the Revised Version it is even clearer: "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed." How soul-assuring is this! Sealing is not a question of experience. It is a precious fact to be accepted on the authority of the Word of God. When you believed the gospel, dear saved one, you were sealed by the Spirit. God the Father put His stamp upon you, so to speak. He did this by giving you the Spirit to dwell in you—He who dwells in us is the seal.

The same epistle says, in chapter 4: 30, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed

unto the day of redemption." You cannot grieve an influence. You may grieve a person, and He is a divine Person by whom you have been sealed.

Does it say, "Sealed *as long as you are faithful?*" No, indeed, for if so,who could be sure of it from one day to another? Does it say, "Lest you grieve Him *away?*" No, not that either, for He is come to *abide* with and in us. "By whom ye are sealed till the day of redemption"—that is the day of Christ's return, when the redemption of our body will take place. Till that blessed consummation He never leaves the believer, neither in life nor in death.

I love to think of Him keeping guard over the very bodies of those who sleep in Jesus. The holy dead are not alone. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." He never loses sight of one of them, and when the Lord returns He will quicken them unto resurrection-life, and escort them to the meeting-place in the air.

But we must not overlook the admonition, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." How may we grieve Him? By disobeying the Word. By indulging in any of the things forbidden in the immediate context. Falsehood of the lips, dishonest practices, corrupt speech, bitterness, anger, clamor, railing and malice — all these grieve Him and hinder His ministry of grace in the life. To walk in the Spirit is to walk as before God, in lowliness and meekness, in purity and self-judgment, obeying the written Word, and thus doing His will from the heart. He who so walks does not grieve this holy, heavenly Guest, who has sealed us until the day of our triumph over death, when our descending Lord shall change the bodies of our humiliation, making them like the body of His glory.

But we must now consider for a little what is suggested by and involved in the term, "the earnest of the Spirit." Eph. 1: 13 speaks of our sealing, as we have seen; and the 14th verse speaks of the earnest. We read, "Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Until this glorious event, of which we spoke a few moments ago, takes place, namely, the redemption of the body, the indwelling Spirit enables us to enjoy a little of what will be our portion forever. He ministers Christ to our souls. He opens up the Word to us. We worship by the Spirit; we pray in the Spirit; we enjoy the fellowship, the communion of the Spirit; "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us." So we have even now, as we tread the sands of the wilderness, "the firstfruits of the Spirit." We taste here the precious fruit of the land. This is the Christian's Eshcol cluster. He gives us now to enjoy in measure what shall be our portion forever.

How important then the exhortation in Eph. 5: 18, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." God would have us enter into His fulness, He would have us entirely under His control—filled with the Spirit day by day.

Notice, we are never exhorted to seek the baptism of the Spirit; nor told to be anointed with the Spirit; neither are we commanded to be sealed with the Spirit. These are blessed facts, true of every believer. But the word is, "Be filled with the Spirit." It is a command that we are not at liberty to ignore. How shall we obey it? Can we be filled at will? Do we obtain this fulness by prayer? Is it a bless-

ing that comes once for all? Or may we need to seek it again and again?

We cannot be filled by deciding to claim it by faith. Neither are we filled by praying for it; and once filled there is no guarantee that we will be in the same blessed state to-morrow. We are only filled with the Spirit as we yield ourselves to God and walk in obedience to His word. By comparing Col. 3:16 with Eph. 5:18 we will see that the same results follow; if the Word of Christ dwells in us richly, it is being filled with the Spirit. What then is the legitimate inference? Surely, that a Word-filled Christian is a Spirit-filled Christian. I do not mean that one who has a mental knowledge of the Word is necessarily Spirit-filled; but when the Word is hidden in the heart and controls the ways, then the Spirit of God fills and energizes, as He cannot do when we ignore the written Word.

People pray for more of the Spirit, but the Spirit is not a liquid, or an element. He is a Person. He wants to get more of you. When you let Him take charge of you, you will be filled with the Spirit.

But this is so big a subject, I must devote another address to it; so, for the present, I would just leave this thought with you:—He will fill every room in your being to which you give Him the key. If He does not fill you it is because you are reserving some part for yourself. Do not simply give Him the best room. He is downright exclusive. He would have all for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom He delights to exalt. Can you say, "None of self, but all of Thee?" Then you will be filled indeed.

Three Words that Transform Human Lives

(Read Romans, chapter 6.)

A LADY said to me recently, "I have read a number of books on 'Deliverance,' but I am still all at sea. They discuss abstract theological questions as to whether the conflict in Romans 7 is between the two natures or whether the man there is trying to find holiness by keeping the law, and similar subjects; but, some way, my mind cannot follow all this abstruse reasoning. I want to be filled with the Spirit. I long for deliverance from the power of sin in the flesh. Can you not tell me, in a simple way, how it may be obtained?"

Because I believe there are many Christians in the same state of mind as this lady, I want to try to show the way to a life in the fulness of the Spirit, in language as simple as possible, and as free from theological terms as I can.

I wish to fix your minds on three words which, rightly apprehended, will I know transform human lives. They have transformed thousands, and will transform *yours* if you lay hold of them in earnest.

They are all found in the 6th chapter of Romans. I would ask you carefully to read the entire passage, then fix your mind on the first of these important terms. It is the word "Reckon," and you will find it in verse 11, "Likewise *reckon* ye yourselves to be dead (or literally, to have died) indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"Likewise"—like what? Consider carefully what

has gone before. In order to do so, it is absolutely necessary to have some conception of the great truths unfolded in this wonderful gospel-epistle.

Roughly speaking, the first two and a half chapters show us the need of the gospel. Man's desperate and irretrievable condition, so far as his own power is concerned, constitutes that need. Upon the proven guilt and helplessness of men of every kind and degree, God reveals His wondrous plan whereby He can save the vilest as well as the best (all on the same principle of His free grace) on the ground of the work of redemption accomplished by Christ Jesus on the cross. By faith in the One who there settled the sin-question to God's satisfaction, the sinner is justified freely and fully. This is unfolded in the second part of chapter three, and in chapter four, and the first part of chapter five—3:20 to 5:11.

But beginning with verse 12 of this 5th chapter a new theme is introduced. What does God do with the sin inherent in the very nature of man when He forgives the sinner? Is this to be subdued by painful penances, or eliminated by an act of divine power? Or is the carnal nature changed by a slow process of sanctification, so that eventually the believer is freed entirely from it?

The answer is the declaration of another line of truth altogether. When Christ died He made atonement not only for what I have done, but His death has ended my life or existence as a natural man—a child of Adam. He, the holy One, bore my sins, and died in my place. God dealt with Him in my stead. Now I am accepted in Him, the risen One, who, as exalted in glory, is the Head of a new race to which

each saved one belongs. "In that He died, He died unto sin once; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." I obtain deliverance from the controlling power of sin to which He died, when in simple faith I reckon His death to be mine.

Just as He died to that sin which God so hated, I, likewise, am called upon to reckon myself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Him. His death was mine; and He is my life. Faith exclaims with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

I am not called upon to improve myself—to gradually improve the old nature; but I am to reckon that I have died to its power and authority; and I am to recognize that my real life now is that of the risen Christ, which is to be manifested in me.

This is what Christian baptism rightly signifies. "We are buried with Him by baptism unto death." In that act I confessed that I—the old, selfish, worldly, sinful man—came to an end in the death of Christ. Now that Christ liveth in me, as my life, He is the power for me to walk in newness of life.

Let me show how this works out practically. In a town of the middle-west a young woman whom we will call Lulu M., was for several years the acknowledged belle of the somewhat limited society of the place. She was talented, beautiful, and vivacious to a marked degree. None more graceful in the dance than she; few could equal her in musical ability; and, withal, she had that mysterious something about her, which we call personality, that attracted to her the young people of both sexes.

Her little world was at her feet, and she loved it intensely, and was loved by it devotedly. If she ever thought of God and eternity it was in a careless, well-bred sort of way, as recognizing that a certain amount of religion was required by modern culture, but that was all. At twenty she was living the life of a young woman whose hopes are all centered in this scene, with no real interest in the things of Christ.

There came to the little city two earnest servants of God, one a faithful gospel preacher, the other a gifted singer, expert in dealing personally with needy souls. For several weeks they conducted evangelistic meetings, and a number were turned from the power of Satan unto God, some of Lulu's associates among them. She was invited to the services, but laughingly said she was afraid to go for fear of becoming converted and losing all the joys of life.

But on the last evening she yielded to a friend's entreaty and went, determined not to yield an inch. But the power of God was in the preaching, and the Holy Spirit convicted her of the fearful sin of rejecting Christ, and she bowed before God in agony of soul, confessing her guilt. That night she was saved, and a few nights later was baptized publicly, to the consternation and indignation of the circle in which she had moved for so long. In vain they tried to woo her back to a world that she now saw to be utterly false, and which she confessed had never really satisfied. Drinking at the fountain of living water, she no longer thirsted for the broken cisterns of earth. When her 21st birthday drew near, her old friends said, "Now is the time to play our trump card. We must have her back." They planned

a surprise party for her, and early that summer evening they gathered on the lawn outside her home. She was first apprized of their presence as they sang a song she had once loved well. Opening the door she greeted them happily, and, touched by their kindness, welcomed them cordially. They had brought baskets of refreshments, and under the trees they ate and drank together. Then the leader, a talented and vivacious young man said, "Now, Lulu, you are coming with us to the theatre. We have bought up all the boxes in your honor, and we will all enjoy the play together."

She hesitated not one moment. "Oh, my friends, you do not understand—I never go to anything like that now. I could not enjoy it." "Why," they declared, "you've often gone and always enjoyed these things in the past. You are getting morbid. Come along, and see how happy you will be."

Firmly she answered, "I cannot take Christ with me there. You know I buried the girl who used to love those things. Now it is not the old self, but Christ who lives in me."

Do you see the point? She *reckoned* herself to have died to the world and its pleasures, so they no longer had dominion over her. And the same principle applies to every form of temptation. Selfishness and worldliness of every description lose their power over the soul when you reckon yourself to have died with Christ.

But now look at the next word. "*Yield* yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."

This is very definite, and I am persuaded it is right here that many fail. They do not *yield* themselves to God; so they never get more than a doc-

trinal deliverance. They understand the theory, but there is no power in the life. To yield is to surrender; or in the language of Rom. 12: 1, to "*present* your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God—your intelligent service." In fact, the original word is the same in both scriptures.

Now you do not *yield* to God by accepting a doctrine. But it is a conscious act of the will. It involves a real surrender of yourself, a subjection of your will to the will of God. And this costs something. It means the crossing of mere natural desires, and the submission of your whole being to the Lord Jesus Christ. To yield to *Him* is to deny *yourself*, to take up your cross and follow the rejected One.

People talk of following Jesus, and sing glibly of following where He leads. But what is really meant by that? What do *you* mean when you speak of following Him? Do you mean to follow Him *into His heaven?* When He said, "Follow Me," it meant to follow Him *in a world of sin and sorrow*, a scene *of rejection and reproach;* that thus following, His disciples might become fishers of men, ere they should share His joy by and by.

A lady was speaking one day of the blessedness of fellowship with God, when a somewhat lukewarm Christian present exclaimed, "I would give the world to have your experience!" "That is exactly what it cost," she quietly replied. It is impossible to live a victorious life and yet cling to the world, or to any form of known sin.

Self-judgment is involved in our first word, "Reckon." Until this takes place you cannot enter into the meaning of the second one, "Yield." It is a

solemn moment in the soul's history when one definitely recognizes the claims of the risen Lord, and cries from the heart,

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

"Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

"Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

"Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

"Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

"Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

"Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

"Take my heart; it is Thine own;
It shall be Thy royal throne.

"Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee."

Miss Havergal has expanded for us this word, "Yielded," in this beautiful hymn. Oh to be able, not alone to sing it, but ever to *mean* it! And this must be, if we would know practical deliverance.

But, alas, how we naturally shrink from such a surrender of ourselves in order that the will of God may be supreme in our lives! Vainly fancying we will be happier doing our own will than doing His—who loves us beyond any earthly friend—we temporize, or even refuse to submit to that which would

mean the entrance into a life of gladness such as we have never hitherto experienced. Be assured no sacrifice for Christ will leave a regret in the day of manifestation. Rather, we would then give worlds, did we possess them, if we could have the opportunity again to live for Him in a scene like this.

When Cleaver, a devoted missionary to the Egyptian Mohammedans, was dying—for the work of Christ—cut down in the midst of his days, he wrote;

"When I am dying how glad I shall be
That the lamp of my life has been blazed out for Thee.
I shall not regret whatever I gave,
Money or time, one sinner to save,
I shall not mind that the road has been rough,
That Thy dear feet led the way is enough.
When I am dying how glad I shall be
That the lamp of my life has been blazed out for Thee."

What half-hearted Christian ever exulted like this over days spent for self, and moments and money wasted on things that are of no lasting profit?

I have recently come across another beautiful little poem that expresses in a way mere prose cannot, the blessedness of a surrendered, a wholly-yielded life.

"Oh the peace of full surrender!
All my joy to do His will!
Mine to trust His faithful promise;
His the promise to fulfil.

Oh the glory and the rapture
Thus to dwell with Christ the Lord;
New delight and wisdom gaining
From the study of His Word.

Pleasure's songs no more entice me,
Nor the bugle note of Fame;
Sweeter far the holy music
Of my dear Redeemer's name.

Oh the glory and the rapture—
Earthly burdens pass away!
Stormy winter turns to summer;
Lonely darkness into day."

But we must now consider a third word, and that is the word, "Obey." "He to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." We were once the servants of sin, living in obedience to our fleshly lusts, led by the devil captive at his will. Saved by grace, having died with Christ, risen in Him, yielded to Him, we are now called to a life of obedience.

But if I am to obey God how shall I know when He speaks?—He has spoken in His Word. He still speaks by His Spirit. And the Word and the Spirit agree. He who would live in practical deliverance from the power of sin must, therefore, feed upon the Word of God. John Bunyan said of the Bible, "This Book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this Book." And this witness is true.

The believer needs the Word for food. It provides spiritual sustenance. As you feed upon it you grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Reading it in dependence on the illumination of the indwelling Holy Spirit, who inspired the writing of it, you learn the will of God. *Obeying* it as revealed, you become filled with the Spirit.

Be assured, dear troubled and often-defeated one, there is no other way to obtain this much desired

blessing. It is not an emotional experience obtained once for all and never needing to be repeated. It is not "a second work of grace," as some well-meaning but, I am persuaded, misguided people put it. It is the legitimate result of obedience to the written Word. As you learn the mind of God and walk in it, you are walking in the Spirit. And it is written, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

It is impossible to be filled with the Spirit if consciously grieving Him. The ungrieved Spirit delights to take of the things of Christ and show them to us. As He thus occupies our hearts with the Lord Himself we are filled indeed. David said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup." Therefore he could say, "My cup runneth over." So will it be with the believer who walks in self-judgment and obedience before God, which leaves the Holy Spirit free to do that in which He delights—to form Christ in us.

But if the Spirit is grieved, He must occupy us with our sins and our failures, until we are again brought to the place where we judge ourselves and confess our sins. Then He is once more free to direct our gaze to Christ, and to empower us to walk as He walked.

Let no one think I am teaching a veiled form of perfectionism in the flesh. It is the very opposite of that. There is no short cut to holiness. But I dare to affirm that a surrendered life will result in the manifestation of the fulness of the Spirit, thus controlling the heart for Christ, and out of the heart are the issues of life.

Now I leave these three words with you: *reckon;*

yield; obey. You will find in them the secret that will transform your life from one of almost constant defeat to one of habitual victory through the indwelling Spirit of the risen Christ.

And if, like the defiled Nazarite, you break down through unwatchfulness, and become defiled by the dead, the only way back to Nazarite separation is to "Repent, and do the first works." Go back to the point of departure. Judge yourself in the light of the cross of Christ, and own that you sinned in using that which belonged to Christ (both by purchase and your personal surrender) for the gratification of self. Learning from the past to be more watchful and prayerful in the future, go on in lowliness to walk softly before Him in loving obedience, undismayed by the evidence that the flesh is still within: and as you walk in the Spirit, you will both know deliverance from carnal lusts, and be to the praise of His glory even in this scene of testing.

But let me add a word of warning. Do not become occupied with your experience, your joy, your growth in grace. Do not talk of yourself or your victories. But rejoice ever in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, according as it is written, "My soul shall make her boast *in the Lord.*" And again, "He that glorieth, let him glory *in the Lord.*"

"Be Thou the Object bright and fair,
To fill and satisfy the heart:
My hope to meet Thee in the air,
And nevermore from Thee to part;
That I may undistracted be,
To follow, serve, and wait for Thee."

The Gifts of the Spirit

IN the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians, one of the two great "gift-chapters" of the Bible, there are two verses on which I would like to focus your attention. In verse 7 we read, "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal;" and verse 11 tells us,"All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will."

From these scriptures we learn three things of great importance in connection with the exercise of spiritual gifts.

First, Gifts are given, not for some individual's happiness, but to be used for the edification of others.

Second, The gifts are only of value as exercised in the energy of the Spirit who gave them.

Third, The Spirit is absolutely sovereign in His bestowal of gifts. He divides "as He will," not according to our desires, however fervent.

These three principles, if but rightly understood, would deliver from much of the misapprehension as to the nature of spiritual gifts that exists to-day, and would also save from the attempt to use the gifts, even if possessed, in the energy of the flesh.

In 1 Corinthians, chap. 12, we have a list of the gifts given at the beginning. In Ephesians 4 we have a much more restricted list, but there we learn that they are gifts to abide in the Church to the end. There is no promise that all of those enumerated in 1 Cor. 12 will remain in the Church in all ages, but

there is a definite promise that those mentioned in Ephesians 4 will remain. On the other hand there is no definite statement that some of the early gifts will be withdrawn, but Scripture itself is witness that many of them began to disappear even in apostolic days, and history proves they have seldom, if ever, been manifested since.

Gifts of healing were in frequent evidence at the beginning of the dispensation. But it seems that Paul himself seldom exercised this gift in his later years. Witness the well-known fact that three of his friends, whom he loved sincerely, were sick, and he wrought no miracle to relieve them, so far as we have any record. Trophimus was left sick at Miletum; Timothy was exhorted to use a well-known remedy for a dyspeptic trouble; Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death for a long period, and the aged apostle's heart was greatly concerned about him. But God had mercy on him, raising him up at last, not miraculously, but when the disease had run its course. Paul could at one time shake off a viper into the fire, but could not remove his "thorn in the flesh;" instead, he was given grace to endure it.

The gift of tongues was given to many when the gospel was first sent to all nations. Babel's confusion was overcome, so to speak, when the twelve, empowered by the Spirit, preached in languages they had never learned. But in all the centuries since, Christian missionaries have had to learn by close application, and generally painstaking study, the strange tongues of the peoples to whom they would give the message of the Cross. As long as it was profitable to give such sign-gifts (signs not to them that believed, but to those who believed not),

the Spirit gave them unstintedly, but they were gradually withdrawn as the need for them passed away.

The gifts are never cited as the proofs of the baptism of the Spirit—though the gift of tongues, on at least two occasions, accompanied it, namely, at Pentecost and in the house of Cornelius. It was but natural that, as the dispensation was being ushered in, there should be some such marked evidences of the reception of the Spirit. To ask for, or expect them now, would be but unbelief, and would only show that such an one had not apprehended the spiritual character of the Church in the present age.

Even in the wonderful days immediately following Pentecost, all did not possess the same gifts. "The manifestation of the Spirit was given to every man to profit withal." Each received the gift he could best use for his special work and for the good of all—the preaching of the gospel to the lost and the building up of the body, the Church.

So it is to-day. The gifts abiding in the Church are not nearly so many in number as at the beginning, but they are all given for profit and edification; none are for show, nor to attest the fact of the Spirit's indwelling, nor yet for the happiness of the recipient. All are not evangelists; all cannot preach. All do not possess the ability to shepherd the flock of God; but all have some measure of gift to be exercised for the blessing of the rest.

In Romans 12: 3-8 we have a passage that is intimately linked with the one in Ephesians. No miracle-working is mentioned there, because the whole Church, at all times, is in view; but each is seen to have some gift, differing according to the grace given unto him. And all the gifts, even the use of

wealth, are to be exercised in subjection to the risen Lord. *Edification* is always in view.

And this is what 1 Cor. 12: 11 implies. The gifts are only of value as used in the energy of the Spirit. Men may have gifts of exhortation, of prophecy, of teaching, and may use them largely to attract attention to themselves, and make a name among their fellows. This is to prostitute the gift to a purpose for which it was never intended. And there is a very real danger here, to which every specially-gifted person is exposed. We all naturally love admiration, we are inclined to court the approbation of our associates. Like Ishmael, we are easily decoyed into living "in the presence of our brethren" instead of in the presence of God. Therefore the need ever to remind ourselves that we have nothing that we have not received, and if received, why should we glory as though it were something of our own?

The God-sent preacher will desire only to preach in the energy of the Holy Spirit. The devoted teacher will yearn to speak ever as the oracles of God, controlled and directed by the Spirit who gave the gift, and who alone is competent to cause that it be used aright. And it is so with all other gifts. None are given for the purpose of adding to the self-importance, or increasing the happiness of the recipient. All are to be used as the Spirit directs.

In the third place—note it well—the Spirit is sovereign in His gifts. He divides severally as He will. It is true we are told to "covet earnestly the best gifts"; and the gift of prophecy—that is, ability of speaking to edification, to exhortation and comfort—is rated as the best of all; but there is no promise that any gift can be had because of earnest desire—

it is as "He will." Still, as the Corinthians were exhorted to "desire earnestly the best gifts," we may rightly pray that gifts may be bestowed on others. But we cannot demand this. There are gifts that some of us will never have. There are gifts some of us are not fit to exercise. The Spirit gives, as the divine Omniscience deems best.

These considerations ought to show how foolish and how unscriptural a thing it is to endeavor to claim certain miraculous gifts, such as those of tongues, interpretations, healings, as though they were peculiar marks of divine favor. Paul flouted all such pretentious folly when he said, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding that with my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

There are many deluded people, connected with certain emotional cults in Christendom, who would rather speak five words in some strange tongue, that they might be thrilled by the novelty of the thing, than speak ten thousand words in their own mother-tongue, and thereby instruct others.

And note again: Though I have used the expression, "*Unknown* tongues" in quoting the apostle's words, it is well to remember there are no *unknown* tongues in view in the scriptural account of the gift of tongues. The word "unknown" is in italics in our English Bibles, and only mars the sense. They were actual tongues known to the people to whom the Spirit enabled them to speak. If any can do this to-day, and are able to preach the gospel in languages they have never learned, by all means let them use their gift in subjection to the glorified Head of the Church. Who would forbid such to speak

with tongues? Dying millions are waiting while earnest missionaries study strange dialects and difficult languages ere they can tell out God's evangel so as to be understood. But who goes to such with the gift of tongues to-day, and makes known the riches of grace in a language never learned either in schools or by personal contact with foreign people?

But if it be clearly evident that miraculous sign-gifts, having served their purpose, have for centuries been conspicuously absent, and are certainly withdrawn, there is all the more reason why each believer should seek to use whatever gift the Spirit of God has given for mutual edification.

The gifts are all viewed in Ephesians as having been given by the risen and ascended Christ: "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Even the gifts of apostles and prophets are viewed in the same light. For though Christ chose the twelve during His earthly ministry, it was after they were endued with the Spirit, "shed forth" from the glorified Lord, that they took their official place.

And He alone calls and qualifies evangelists, pastors and teachers, who carry on the work which the apostles and prophets of the new dispensation began. We have their ministry still in their writings. The Gospels of the apostles Matthew and John, John's Epistles and the Revelation are with us to-day. Mark and Luke were prophets, and we have their ministry also. So with the ministries of Paul, of James, of Peter, and of Jude—apostles all, who thus abide with us.

It is the business of the evangelist to preach the gospel they have preserved for us. It is the work of

the pastor and the teacher to apply and expound the instruction they have left on record for our learning. And to do this aright, earnest application is required; what care to be approved unto God as unashamed workmen, marking out in straight lines the Word of truth! And this can only be as the will is yielded to God, and the instrument learns to *do* and *teach* as guided by the Spirit.

To be really edifying, all ministry must be in the power of the Holy Spirit. Gift, of itself, does not necessarily evidence spirituality. It is clear that the Corinthians were using the gifts for self-gratification, vain-gloriously, rather than solely for the honor of the one Lord from whom they came. It is only as one realizes his responsibility to minister as unto the Lord, of the ability that God gives, that he is in the path of safety. Gift perverted to exalt self must bring serious results in its train.

We have examples of this in those of whom Paul writes so sorrowfully to the Philippians; who preached Christ of contention, not sincerely, but supposing to add affliction to the bonds he was enduring for the truth's sake. While he could rejoice that Christ was preached, whatever the motives or the state of soul of those doing the preaching, yet it would be a solemn thing indeed for them who thus misused the gifts bestowed upon them.

Nor is mere natural brilliancy or ability to be confounded with a divinely-bestowed gift. If there be, for instance, ability of speech and readiness of utterance, these alone do not constitute a man a preacher. If there be aptness in didactic instruction, this is not in itself to be confounded with the gift of the teacher. It is the divine unction that makes the

ready speaker a true gospel preacher, or the thoughtful exponent of deeper truths a real teacher. The tongue like as of fire, though now unseen, rests still upon the head of the God-anointed servants to the Church.

How important then that he who would minister in holy things, be often alone in the presence of God that he may hear a voice speaking in his inmost soul from off the mercy-seat, and so go forth to speak in very truth as the oracle of God! Mark, it is not only in accordance with the oracles of God — the Holy Scriptures—but the servant himself is to speak as voicing the mind of God for the moment. Of Haggai we read, "Then spake Haggai, the Lord's messenger, in the Lord's message."

No matter how frequently a preacher may speak from some one particular text, or a teacher instruct in regard to some one particular line of truth, it is necessary on each occasion to stand before men only after one has secretly bowed before God, even if circumstances prevent retiring to some private place for this holy purpose. Only as the servant realizes his utter weakness and his constant dependence will he preach or teach or exhort in the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul could say, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." Here was no mere self-assurance, as of one so accustomed to expounding divine mysteries that he needed no secret preparation of heart. But standing before men after having bowed before God he could say, "When I am weak, then am I strong"—the power of the Spirit enabling him for ministry.

One more consideration before closing. It is a word to saints regarding their responsibility toward

those who, in a very special sense, are recognized as gifts to the Church. Be careful how you treat those thus given to you; for, remember, they are the risen Christ's love-gifts to His people. Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, all are yours, and to be cherished as such. Do not spoil them by flattery. Do not put the gift in place of the Giver. Do not be occupied with their eloquence or natural ability. This is to magnify the servant instead of the message he brings.

A gentleman is reported to have heard on consecutive Lord's days two great London preachers—Dr. Joseph Parker and Charles H. Spurgeon. Enthusiastically he remarked, when telling of them afterwards, "Dr. Parker is a great preacher; but Mr. Spurgeon has a great Saviour!" Ah, that is it. Magnify the One of whom the voice speaks. Do not become occupied with the voice itself. "Speak not," said Carey, "of Dr. Carey, but of Dr. Carey's Saviour!"—and so would every true-hearted servant of God desire of those who hear him. "He must increase, but I must decrease," cried the divinely-appointed forerunner.

On the other hand, remember that to belittle the messenger and to carpingly criticize the servant is, indirectly, to insult the Master who has sent him. He has said, "He that heareth you heareth Me, and He that receiveth you receiveth Me." If this be but kept in mind how it would put the clamp on much unkind fault-finding, when saints discern, or fancy they discern, in certain servants characteristics that may not be in accord with the highest cultural or spiritual standards. All the work that God has committed to men has been accomplished through imper-

fect instrumentalities. He has had only one perfect Servant in this scene, and He was scorned, derided, and crucified. All other servants come short in something, and most in many things. Nevertheless, God graciously deigns to use them; He is very jealous of them and notes every slight put upon them, while He rewards all who receive them for His name's sake, who said, "Go ye, and disciple all nations...teaching them,...and lo, *I am with you.*"

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